

the Senate failed to adopt Senator Levin's amendment, it missed a golden opportunity to adjust its priorities in order to face our country's most pressing threat—the threat of terrorism.

I was disappointed that the Senate failed to reduce the retirement age for those in the National Guard and Reserve from 60 to 55. Our country has placed unprecedented demands upon the Guard and Reserve since September 11, 2001, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Considering the demands we are placing on them, it is time that we lower the Guard and Reserve's retirement age to the same level as civilian federal employees.

Although my support for reducing the reserve component retirement age has been unwavering, because of the significant budgetary impact of this measure I had hoped that Congress would first receive reviews of reserve compensation providing all of the information that we need to address this issue responsibly. I patiently waited for several studies on the issue, including by the Defense Department, but when the studies came out they called for further study. This matter cannot continue to languish unaddressed indefinitely. As retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Steve Strobbridge, government relations director for the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA, put it, "It is time to fish or cut bait." I agree with MOAA's analysis that, "Further delay on this important practical and emotional issue poses significant risks to long-term (Guard and Reserve) retention" and I was proud to vote for the amendment offered by the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. CORZINE.

I also believe that the Senate missed an opportunity to provide a small but needed measure of relief to military families when it failed to adopt my Military Family Leave Act amendment. This amendment would have allowed a spouse, child, or parent who already qualifies for Family and Medical Leave Act, FMLA, benefits—unpaid leave—to use those existing benefits for issues directly arising from the deployment of a family member. The Senate adopted a similar amendment by unanimous consent when I offered it to the Iraq supplemental spending bill. This amendment has the support of the Military Officers Association of America, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, the Reserve Officers Association, the National Guard Association of the United States, the National Military Family Association, and the National Partnership for Women and Families.

I regret that a harmful second degree amendment was offered to my amendment and that I was not given the opportunity to have a straight up or down vote. Rather than taking up the Senate's time in a protracted debate about the second degree amendment, I withdrew my amendment so that this important defense authorization bill could move forward. However, the need addressed by my amendment remains

and I will continue to fight to bring some relief to military families that sacrifice so much for all of us.

I want to bring attention to another element of the Defense Authorization bill that raises concerns for me. The Defense Authorization bill includes language that raises troop caps in Colombia from 400 to 800 military personnel and from 400 civilian contractors to 600. I am disappointed that Senator BYRD's amendment was not approved by the Senate, which would have limited the increases in these caps to 500 military personnel and 500 civilian contractors. I have serious concerns about the increase in these caps to the levels established by the bill. Most importantly, I worry about placing more Americans in harm's way in Colombia. Further deployments bring greater risks to an already overstretched military. We do not want to risk being drawn further into Colombia's civil war—certainly not without a thorough debate that the American people can follow. In addition, many of my constituents and I remain concerned that by raising these caps, the U.S. devotes greater resources to the military side of the equation in Colombia without balancing our approach through greater support for democratic institutions, increasing economic development, and supporting human rights.

There are other provisions in this bill with which I disagree and the Senate rejected a number of amendments that would have made this bill better. However, on balance this legislation contains many good provisions for our men and women in uniform and their families and that is why I will vote for it.

U.S.-AUSTRALIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of an important free trade agreement that was recently signed between the United States and Australia. Earlier today, I was pleased to join an overwhelming majority of my colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee to report out this agreement favorably, and I am hopeful that within the next day, the full Senate will give its consent as well. This vote not only reaffirms our strong relationship with a close ally but marks an important step forward on our path toward economic recovery.

Since 1994, two-way trade between the United States and Australia has increased 53 percent to nearly \$29 billion. Australia purchases more goods from the United States than any other country, giving the United States a \$9 billion bilateral goods and services trade surplus. Last year alone, my homestate of Oregon exported more than \$257 million in merchandise to Australia. These exports accounted for 2.5 percent of the State total in 2003.

The elimination of trade barriers between the two countries promises to

increase these figures even more. Under the agreement, duties on almost all manufactured goods will be eliminated. This will result in first-year tariff savings of about \$300 million for U.S. manufactured goods exporters. For Western Star—a subsidiary of DaimlerChrysler—located in Portland, OR, this translates to savings of nearly \$2 million a year in eliminated tariffs and duties that currently average \$4,000 per truck exported to Australia. It is estimated that U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement will result in approximately \$2 billion of new U.S. exports.

This agreement will also open new doors for U.S. farmers. U.S. agricultural exports to Australia, totaling more than \$700 million last year, will receive immediate duty-free access. This means American farmers will be better poised to compete in a market of over 19 million people. Additionally, food inspection procedures that have posed barriers in the past have been addressed, and substantial safeguards have been written into the agreement to ensure a smooth and stable transition for our domestic meat and dairy industries.

As I come here today, I realize that there are those who still have reservations over the prospects of expanded trade. While the benefits of a more liberalized trade policy are vast, I know that they have not been spread evenly across all sectors. I am confident, however, that the safeguards in this agreement will ensure a stable market for domestic procedures while providing new market access and real consumer benefits. I believe this agreement is good for the United States, and I urge its passage.

REVEREND DONALD J. LONGBOTTOM

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise today to thank Rev. Don Longbottom for accepting Senate Chaplain Barry Black's and my invitation to join us in the U.S. Senate and offer the opening prayer. I also would like to recognize his wife, Lori, who has accompanied him to Washington from Nebraska.

Reverend Longbottom is currently the Senior Minister at Countryside Community Church United Church of Christ in Omaha, NE. He ministers to more than 2,000 members of Countryside Community Church in Omaha, including my dear friends Ron and Lois Roskens and former Nebraska Congressman John Y. McCollister and his wife Nan.

In addition to his leadership in faith communities in Kansas, Ohio, and California, Reverend Longbottom continues to dedicate himself to the spiritual and community needs of many Nebraskans. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the United Church of Christ Nebraska Conference and has taught college courses in Environmental and Business Ethics.

I again thank Reverend Longbottom for leading today's prayer for my colleagues and I in the U.S. Senate and for guiding us in reflecting upon the tremendous responsibilities we have as lawmakers.

COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILDERNESS ACT

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, as founder of the Senate Wilderness Caucus, I introduced a Senate resolution to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which was signed into law on September 3, 1964, by President Lyndon B. Johnson. I thank the following colleagues for their support as cosponsors: Senator SUNUNU, Senator HAGEL, Senator DURBIN, Senator BOXER, Senator MCCAIN, Senator MURRAY, Senator LUGAR, Senator WARNER, Senator CHAFEE, Senator SNOWE, and Senator COLLINS.

The Wilderness Act became law seven years after the first wilderness bill was introduced by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota. The final bill, sponsored by Senator Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, passed the Senate by a vote of 73–12 on April 9, 1963, and passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 373–1 on July 30, 1964. The Wilderness Act of 1964 established a National Wilderness Preservation System “to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.” The law gives Congress the authority to designate wilderness areas, and directs the Federal land management agencies to review the lands under their responsibility for their wilderness potential.

Under the Wilderness Act, wilderness is defined as “an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.” The creation of a national wilderness system marked an innovation in the American conservation movement—wilderness would be a place where our “management strategy” would be to leave lands essentially undeveloped.

The original Wilderness Act established 9.1 million acres of Forest Service land in 54 wilderness areas. Now, after passage of 102 pieces of legislation, the wilderness system is comprised of over 104 million acres in 625 wilderness areas, across 44 States, and administered by four Federal agencies: the Forest Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service in the Department of the Interior.

As we in this body know well, the passage and enactment of the Wilderness Act was a remarkable accomplishment that required steady, bipartisan commitment, institutional support,

and strong leadership. The U.S. Senate was instrumental in shaping this very important law, and this anniversary gives us the opportunity to recognize this role.

As a Senator from Wisconsin, I feel a special bond with this issue. The concept of wilderness is inextricably linked with Wisconsin. Wisconsin has produced great wilderness thinkers and leaders in the wilderness movement such as Senator Gaylord Nelson and the writer and conservationist Aldo Leopold, whose *A Sand County Almanac* helped to galvanize the environmental movement. Also notable is Sierra Club founder John Muir, whose birthday is the day before Earth Day. Wisconsin also produced Sigurd Olson, one of the founders of the Wilderness Society.

I am privileged to hold the Senate seat held by Gaylord Nelson, a man for whom I have the greatest admiration and respect. Though he is a well-known and widely respected former Senator and former two-term Governor of Wisconsin, and the founder of Earth Day, some may not be aware that he is currently devoting his time to the protection of wilderness by serving as a counselor to the Wilderness Society—an activity which is quite appropriate for someone who was also a co-sponsor, along with former Senator Proxmire, of the bill that became the Wilderness Act.

The testimony at congressional hearings and the discussion of the bill in the press of the day reveals Wisconsin's crucial role in the long and continuing American debate about our wild places, and in the development of the Wilderness Act. The names and ideas of John Muir, Sigurd Olson, and, especially, Aldo Leopold, appear time and time again in the legislative history.

Senator Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, chairman of what was then called the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, stated his support of the wilderness system was the direct result of discussions he had held almost 40 years before with Leopold, who was then in the Southwest with the Forest Service. It was Leopold who, while with the Forest Service, advocated the creation of a primitive area in the Gila National Forest in New Mexico in 1923. The Gila Primitive Area formally became part of the wilderness system when the Wilderness Act became law.

In a statement in favor of the Wilderness Act in the *New York Times*, then-Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall discussed ecology and what he called “a land ethic” and referred to Leopold as the instigator of the modern wilderness movement. At a Senate hearing in 1961, David Brower of the Sierra Club went so far as to claim that “no man who reads Leopold with an open mind will ever again, with a clear conscience, be able to step up and testify against the wilderness bill.” For others, the ideas of Olson and Muir—particularly the idea that preserving wil-

derness is a way for us to better understand our country's history and the frontier experience—provided a justification for the wilderness system.

In closing, I would like to remind colleagues of the words of Aldo Leopold in his 1949 book, *A Sand County Almanac*. He said, “The outstanding scientific discovery of the twentieth century is not the television, or radio, but rather the complexity of the land organism. Only those who know the most about it can appreciate how little is known about it.” We still have much to learn, but this anniversary of the Wilderness Act reminds us how far we have come and how the commitment to public lands that the Senate and the Congress demonstrated 40 years ago continues to benefit all Americans.

COSPONSORSHIP OF S. 2603

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I am pleased to announce that I have signed on today as a cosponsor to S. 2603, the Junk Fax Prevention Act of 2004. This legislation is vital in preserving a valuable small business tool and empowers consumers by requiring an opt-out option on faxes.

Consumers will benefit from this act because of the provision that requires all unsolicited advertisers to provide an opt-out option on the front page of all solicitations. This notice must be clear and conspicuous, and the mechanism for opting out must be at no cost to the consumer.

The Junk Fax Prevention Act will also benefit small businesses because they will be able to continue corresponding with customers and business partners who have an established business relationship. This is especially important for businesses, like real estate companies and restaurants, which rely on faxes to do business. Faxes are beneficial because they are a low cost way to stay in touch with customers and clients. When an employee leaves a business, his or her email account is frequently shut down. Faxes allow the information to reach the new person with the correct job.

Communication is the key to successful businesses. This bill strikes the right balance between prohibiting unwanted faxes while allowing small businesses to easily stay in touch with customers.

I thank my colleague from Oregon, Senator SMITH, for sponsoring this legislation. I look forward to discussing the Junk Fax Prevention Act of 2004 in committee and urge my colleagues to adopt the necessary pro-small business and pro-consumer legislation.

THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, on July 11, the 15th Annual International AIDS Conference began in Bangkok, Thailand. The theme of this year's conference is “Access for All,” meaning access to lifesaving medications. As